wardly, "But surely, Comrade Commissar, nobody here meant it that way. All we wanted to say was that we need shoes. Come on, boys, show your shoes to the Commissar!"

I asked the chairman to put to a vote a resolution repealing the previous decision. A recess of the meeting was announced and the regimental committee went into a huddle to prepare the new text. Kharash and I remained where we were to show the men we had no part in the committee's deliberations. The men surrounded us, showing their shoes, complaining of the rain, insisting I had misunderstood them. They were friendly, some even sentimental.

Then the committee appeared with a new resolution. "The regiment has firmly decided to defend the motherland and the revolution to its last drop of blood, but feels that without shoes it would be unfit for battle. It therefore asks the commander of the army, the commissar, and the Iskosol to take necessary steps to procure fifteen hundred pairs of shoes for the outfit." I took the resolution to show the commander of the army; Kharash got a copy for the Iskosol.

As we returned to our car, the colonel whispered to me, "Mr. Commissar, I take the liberty of reporting . . . They might have torn you to pieces, and that would have been the end of us all. . . ." Kharash replied for me. "There was no danger. Comrade Commissar showed the men that he was angry, that he lost his temper. But even so he treated them as human beings. The men felt they were wrong and became ashamed of themselves."

There was one aspect of the situation that Kharash, himself an enlisted man, did not see. It was easy for us to be firm with a sick regiment: our prestige protected us like an invisible coat of mail. But the officers had no such armor, and they had to live with their men through days and nights. Their task was immeasurably more difficult than ours.

The campaign to strengthen discipline among the troops went along without serious clashes. The other part of our program—purging the army of criminal elements—proved more difficult. I had invited the prosecuting attorney of the army to the Iskosol and asked him to help us enforce the law. The attorney, a middle-aged, important-looking man in a well-fitting uniform, replied icily, "What 'law' do you expect us to enforce? A resolution of the Soviets is no law. The legality of the orders of the Provisional Government is questionable."

I reminded him, "After the revolution you took an oath to serve the new government. Its decrees are laws to you as well as to me. If you denounce your oath, you cannot be a law-enforcement officer." His hands trembling, he shouted, "In the law I enforced for more than thirty years the worst crime of all was an attempt against the